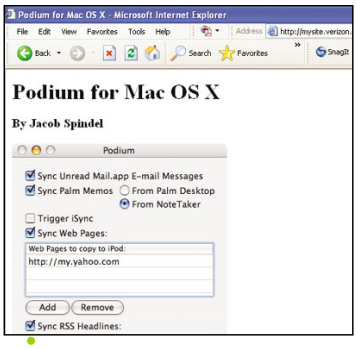
Utilities For Your iPod

iTunes is superb at organizing and transferring music to the iPod, but it's not the only app that can talk to your iPod. Many developers have created free add-ons for Mac OS X and Windows to make the iPod even better.



Podium 1.0.3
Free
Jacob Spindel
mysite.verizon.net/jacobspindel/podium.htm

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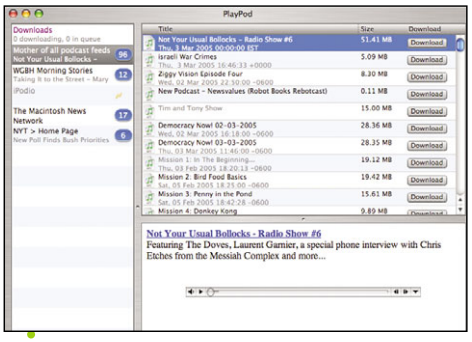
Podium 1.0.3

If you take your iPod everywhere, fill it with data you can use on the go, in addition to your music. Podium synchronizes information between a Mac and an iPod. You can use it to store unread email, Web page text, RSS news feeds, and memos from Palm Desktop. Just tell Podium the URLs of your favorite blogs, click Sync, and the headlines are sent to the iPod's Notes folder. You can then read email and blogs while away from your Internet connection.

In my testing, I kept seeing a cryptic AppleScript error message, and the email sync function only worked with Apple's Mail client. (Entourage and Thunderbird users are out of luck.) The biggest drawback is the iPod's 4KB limit on notes. If a future version can split long files into 4KB chunks, Podium would be an indispensable tool for iPod addicts.


PlayPod
Not Your Usual Bollocks - Radio Show #6
Featuring The Doves, Laurent Garnier, a special phone interview with Chris Etches from the Messiah Complex and more...

PlayPod 0.3.3
Free
IGG software
www.iggsoftware.com/playpod

CPU CPU CPU CPU

PlayPod 0.3.3

If you have heard about podcasts but don't know how to start listening, start with PlayPod. The app is an RSS viewer optimized for audio. As you browse a list of available podcasts, you can read the program descriptions and preview the audio files on your Mac (or listen to the entire program). Just click the Download button to fetch the audio file and move it to iTunes, automatically filing it into the playlist of choice. When you plug in your iPod, the podcast will be ready to listen to.

You can set PlayPod to automatically download all the new podcasts of a favorite feed after they're put online; meaning a never-ending stream of great audio content. PlayPod is still in beta, but it's a free, easy way to discover and download podcasts.

iPodAgent 0.7.1.0
Free
Mark Reddick
www.ipodsoft.com

CPU CPU CPU CPU

iPodAgent 0.7.1.0

iPodAgent, a multipurpose utility for Windows users, can export music from the iPod to the PC, a feature Apple doesn't include. That feature can be vital if your PC's hard drive crashes, taking your music collection with it. iPodAgent can also export a list of the music on your iPod, saving it as a HTML file, comma-delimited text file, or plain text.

iPodAgent's features for putting data into an iPod may be more useful on a day-to-day basis. A Save Notes feature lets you save any text file to iPod's Notes or Contacts folders. Notes larger than the iPod's 4KB limit are automatically split into separate, linked notes. The real fun starts with the Synchronize feature, which grabs data from the Web and saves it as notes on the iPod. You can easily import RSS feeds, weather reports, movie times, and daily horoscopes. Text files are in 4KB chunks, so you can spend an afternoon reading lengthy blog entries on your iPod screen. You can also export mail, tasks, and calendar items from Microsoft Outlook (but not other email clients) and have Outlook contacts synchronized to the iPod's Contacts folder.

iPod Agent is in beta, and despite some UI quirks, it's an easy way to put useful data and entertaining reading on your iPod. ▲

by Kevin Savetz

Podtastic Web Sites

iTunes Music Store fans will want to visit TunesTracker (www.tunestracker.com), a free service that alerts you via email or RSS when the store has new songs by your favorite artists and composers. Additionally, a news page gathers iPod and iTunes news from around the Web. Smart Playlists (www.smartplaylists.com) provides ideas for using iTunes' Smart Playlists feature to organize your music in creative playlists, such as B-sides, remixes, and songs from movies. Mac OS X users can enhance iTunes with Doug's AppleScripts for iTunes (www.malcolmadams.com/itunes), which add such features as duplicate track removal, finding album art, and moving files from the iPod to the Mac. ▲

CPU Ranking: 0 = Absolutely Worthless CPU CPU 2.5 = Absolutely Average CPU CPU CPU CPU CPU 5 = Absolutely Perfect